(v) to change the practice of associating non-official members belonging to SC/ST, Minority and OBC communities, in the Interview Committees and to revert back to the earlier practice of associating serving Railway Officers belonging to these communities, with the provision that in case of non-availability of serving Railway Officers of the respective communities, State/Central Govt./P.S.U./ Bank Officers belonging to these communities and in case of further difficulty, retired Railway Officers of proven integrity belonging to these communities will be associated;

(vi) to introduce the system of duplicate carbonless Answer sheets, the duplicate Answer sheets being sent to the RRCB for independent evaluation, as considered necessary; and

(vii) to set up a grievances redressal machinery to deal systematically with various complaints and representations regarding the functioning of the RRBs' and selections conducted by them.

Violation of recommendation on placement of orders for wagons

416. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI GAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the recommendation of the Rajya Sabha Committee on placement of orders for wagons is being violated by the Railways; and

(b) if so, the relevant recommendation and details of the action taken by Government to implement it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) Action Taken Note by the Ministry of Railways on the recommendations of the Rajya Sabha Committee has already been submitted to Rajya Sabha Secretariat in August 1996. It was mentioned in Action Taken Note that from 97-98, Railways would procure 75% through wagon India Limited and 25% through tender. It was also mentioned that effectiveness of this policy would be closely watched, so as to take suitable corrective action, if necessary, in the overall interest. Since procurement through tender resulted in substantial savings to Railways, a review of the above policy was carried out and it was decided after such a review to change the earlier policies from 98-99 and to procure full requirement of wagons through open competitive endering.

This change in policy was conveyed to Chairman Rajya Sabha vide this Ministry's letter dated 22.7.97 and also on the floor of the House on 14.8.97 during discussions on this Ministry's supplementary demands for grants.

Expansion and development projects for Railways

417. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleaded to state:

(a) whether many projects for the expansion and development of Railways are under construction;

(b) the details thereof, project-wise;

(c) the estimated cost thereof;

(d) the total amount spent thereon upto 31st March, 1998 and details of various sources for mobilising funds for these projects; and

(e) by when the above projects are likely to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Jhuggi Clusters near Railway Lines

418. SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the vacant land lying near the railway lines is being converted into jhuggi clusters thus polluting the atmosphere around it;

(b) the reasons for Government not planning to give those lands to private agencies to convert that land into parks, etc; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the Government plan in this regard?